



US Marine Corps and Marine Forces Reserve Artillery



Marines from F Battery fire an M777 during their deployment with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit in support of combat operations for Operation Inherent Resolve. (Courtesy photo)

10th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division

In 2017, Marines and Sailors of 10th Marine Regiment maintained a high operational tempo and deployment cycles while simultaneously retaining the ability to provide Fires in support of 2nd Marine Division. During this period the regiment conducted one regimental, four battalion and numerous battery-level firing exercises. Notably, in July Battery C supported exercise Iron Wolf and in September, 2nd Battalion supported the multi-national exercise Bold Alligator 17.

During this period, 10th Marines continued to generate and deploy forces in support of combatant commanders. Battery I and Battery E deployed as a part of the Unit Deployment Program to Okinawa, Japan. Further, Battery F deployed with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit and fired in support of combat operations for Operation Inherent Resolve. Headquarters, 1st Battalion, 10th Marines and Battery A deployed and relieved Battery F supporting combat operations to defeat ISIS in Syria. These 10th Marines units fired more than 3,200 missions and more than 31,000 rounds combined with devastating effects leading to the successful recapturing of Raqqa. According to Maj. Gen. John Love, 2nd Marine Division commander, the 10th Marines' batteries have killed more ISIS than

anybody else out there right now, including special operations forces.

11th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, *Cannon Cockers*

Located aboard Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton, Calif., and Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, Calif., the 11th Marine Regiment continues to provide accurate and timely fire support to the 1st Marine Division and 1st Marine Expeditionary Force across the globe while supporting the full range of military operations.

Employing the M777A2 towed 155 mm howitzer, the M142A2 High-Mobility Artillery Rocket System and the M327 rifled, towed 120 mm mortar Expeditionary Fire Support System, the *Cannon Cockers* of 11th Marine Regiment are ready to provide tailored fire support to the maneuver commander in any clime or place.

True to its expeditionary nature, 11th Marines provides forces to almost every aspect of Marine Corps operations. Eleventh Marines continues to deploy artillery batteries in support of Western Pacific Marine Expeditionary Unit operations, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit deployments, and the Unit Deployment Program. Additionally, the regiment provides fire supporters to every maneuver regiment and separate battalion in the 1stMarDiv.

Over the past year, the *Cannon Cockers* have supported 1st Marine Division exercises Steel Knight and Desert Scimitar with general support artillery Fires. Eleventh Marines continues to support units organic and adjacent to 1stMarDiv, including Training and Education Command, the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Expeditionary Warfare Training Group Pacific, and Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron One. The *Cannon Cockers* continue to meet all enduring and emerging requirements as the regiment trains to its core task of providing lethal fire support to the maneuver commander.

1st Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, *Cobra*

1st Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment remained heavily engaged in sustaining proficiency as a cannon battalion throughout 2017. First Battalion conducted numerous live-fire training exercises in support of 1st Marine Regiment and 1st Marine Division and also provided fire support teams and mission-ready batteries in support of Marine Expeditionary Units.

First Battalion provided cannon and mortar Fires in the conduct of Integrated Training Exercise (ITX) 3-17, ITX 1-18, and multiple tactical air control party certifications and infantry battalion Marine Corps combat readiness evaluations (MCCREs). First Battalion successfully completed a battalion-level MCCRE and also participated in Desert Firing Exercise and Steel Knight.

2nd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, *Patriot*

Over the course of 2017, 2nd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment conducted a multitude of exercises across Southern California and



Marines fire a High Mobility Artillery Rocket System from the flight deck of the amphibious transport dock ship USS Anchorage (LPD 23) during Dawn Blitz 2017 over the Pacific Ocean, Oct. 22. (Courtesy photo)

Arizona, while providing batteries and fire supporters to III Marine Expeditionary Force's operations in the Pacific. Second Battalion continued to reinforce its habitual supporting relationship with 5th Marine Regiment, providing fire support teams to infantry units in addition to supporting their live-fire and maneuver training exercises.

During 2017, 2nd Battalion and subordinate units participated in Integrated Training Exercise 5-17, Weapons and Tactics Instruc-

Marines with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit fire an M777 howitzer during a fire mission in northern Syria as part of Operation Inherent Resolve, March 24. (Cpl. Zachery C. Laning/U.S. Marine Corps)



tor Course 1-18, tactical air control party certifications, infantry battalion Marine Corps combat readiness evaluations (MCCREs), Mountain Warfare Training Center training in Bridgeport, Calif., and battery and battalion-level firing exercises. Second battalion also successfully completed a battalion-level MCCRE.

3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, *Thunder*

Third Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, continues to train and support numerous units with 155 mm artillery Fires aboard Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, Calif. The battalion is committed to reinforcing its habitual supporting relationship with 7th Marines through ongoing staff planning, integration and training; while consistently pursuing refinement of battalion tactics, techniques and procedures.

The battalion trained to its core mission by firing in support of 7th Marines, Marine Corps combat readiness evaluations, tactical air control party certifications and battalion through division-level field exercises. Third Battalion also provided forces and Fires in support of integrated training exercises 2-17 and 1-18. The host of training opportunities provided vital preparation for the Marines and the battalion.

5th Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, *Steel Rain*

Fifth Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment continued to refine the U.S. Marine Corps doctrine of precision long-range Fires as the general support rocket artillery battalion to 1st Marine Division. Battalion training included multiple joint and service exercises. Fifth Battalion focused on the conduct of rocket artillery raids when deployed by landing craft, air cushion, and Marine Corps and joint fixed wing transport aircraft.

Throughout the year, 5th Battalion, 11th Marines supported regiment, division and Marine Expeditionary Force-level exercises including Large Scale Exercise-17, Northern Edge, Dawn Blitz, Desert Firing Exercise and Steel Knight. The battalion continues to focus on long-range command and control and combined arms operations across the range of military operations.

12th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, *Thunder Regiment*

Located aboard Camp Hansen, Okinawa, Japan, 12th Marine Regiment provides mortar, cannon, and rocket fire support to 3rd Marine Division and III Marine Expeditionary Force across the Pacific Region.

Third Battalion, 12th Marines is co-located with the regimental headquarters on Camp Hansen. Its firing batteries are deployed through the Unit Deployment Program (UDP) which provides three rotationally assigned cannon/mortar batteries and a single rotationally assigned rocket battery. First Battalion, 12th Marines is located aboard Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay and with three cannon/mortar batteries permanently assigned to it. One of those three batteries is rotationally forward deployed to Okinawa under 3/12th Marines. The other rotationally forward deployed cannon/rocket batteries are provided from the continental United States by 10th and 11th Marine regiments.

Throughout 2017, Marines and Sailors from 12th Marines conducted over 20 mission rehearsals in four different countries, employing the M777A2 towed 155 mm howitzer, the M142A2 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS), and the M327 towed 120 mm mortar Expeditionary Fire Support System (EFSS). The quantity, diversity and quality of these mission rehearsals demon-

strates the readiness and proficiency of the 12th Marine Regiment to provide all weather Fires to 3rd Marine Division and III MEF throughout the Pacific Command area of responsibility.

Immediately at the start of the New Year, the division fire support coordination center, regimental fire direction center and target acquisition platoon conducted a Fire Support Rehearsal Exercise in Okinawa to refresh and maintain digital fire support coordination skills.

During the months of January and February, 3/12th Marines provided live artillery Fires in support of 1st Marine Infantry Regiment's combined arms breaching, air assault, and mechanized maneuver at Integrated Training Exercise 2-17 at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif. From Jan. 12 to Feb. 18, Headquarters Battery, 3/12th Marines deployed from Camp Hansen, Okinawa, to Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, where it was joined by Battery B/12th Marines from Marine Corps Base-Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, as well as Battery I/11th Marines from Twentynine Palms, Calif.

The 12th Marine Regimental Headquarters verified its combat standard operating procedures during a field training exercise in the Central Training Area of Okinawa, Japan, in February which prepared the regimental headquarters for a busy spring and summer exercise schedule.

Forward deployed batteries from 3rd Battalion conducted exercises across the western Pacific in February, with Battery A/12th Marines conducting live-fire in the Hijudai Maneuver Area, Kyushu, Japan, as part of the Artillery Relocation Training Program (ARTP). The ARTP is a routine training event where forward deployed U.S. Marine Corps artillery forces conduct live-fire training throughout mainland Japan to maintain combat readiness in support of the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security. Also in February, Battery M/11th Marines conducted live-fire training in Republic of Korea as a part of Korea Marine Exchange Program (KMEP) 17.3, firing in support of 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines. KMEP is a series of exercises between the U.S. Marine Corps and Republic of Korea Marine Corps (ROKMC) which helps to develop the ROKMC across a range of warfighting capabilities, while increasing the interoperability between the USMC and ROKMC in support of the mutual defense of the Republic of Korea. Battery S/11th Marines conducted dry fire HIMARS reconnaissance, selection, and occupation of position at Combined Arms Training Center, Camp Fuji, Japan, throughout the month of February. Rotation of the east coast battery completed a busy month for 3rd Battalion, with Battery C/10th Marines being replaced with Battery I/10th Marines.

In March, A/12th Marines deployed from Okinawa to the Hijudai Maneuver Area, on the Japanese island of Kyushu, in order to conduct ARTP 16-4, a battery-level ARTP live-fire exercise. First Battalion began its series of exercises with Spartan Fury (SF) 17-1, conducting live-fire training with both Battery B/12th Marines and Battery C/12th Marines at Pohakuloa Training Area on the Big Island of Hawaii in March. The forward combat operations center (COC) of both the 12th Marines Headquarters and the 3rd Battalion Headquarters deployed from Okinawa, Japan, to Pohakuloa Training Area, Hawaii, joining 1st Battalion to conduct Dragon Firing Exercise (DF) 17-1. Additionally, significant portions of the regimental target acquisition platoon deployed to PTA as part of SF 17-1 and DF 17-1. This marked the second time in seven months the regiment massed the Fires of its normally geographically separated battalions. At the same time as this exercise in Hawaii, Battery

S/11th Marines (the HIMARS battery assigned to 3rd Battalion) fired reduced range practice rockets at Rocket Valley and Saint Barbara Range, in the Republic of Korea as part of KMEP 17-6.

Additionally, M/11th Marines, part of the UDP rotation, participated in Fuji Viper 17.3 supporting 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment in their maneuver exercise aboard Combined Arms Training Center, Camp Fuji, Japan. The division fire support coordination centers (FSCC) supported Key Resolve 17 along with III Marine Expeditionary Force and 3rd Marine Division in deliberate and dynamic targeting in March.

The rotation of batteries continued in April, with Battery M/11th Marines returning to Twentynine Palms, Calif. and Battery K/11th Marines arriving joining 3/12th Marines on Okinawa. Battery K/11th Marines quickly established itself and conducted ARTP training at the Ojojihara Maneuver Training Area at the end of the month. Battery S/11th Marines also returned to Camp Pendleton, Calif., being replaced by Battery Q/11th Marines. The regimental headquarters and division FSCC participated in the MEF Exercise 2017 simulation, supporting the exercise by providing the division with counter fire, deliberate and dynamic targeting.

In June, the regimental headquarters, 3/12th Headquarters and Battery I/10th Marines deployed to the Republic of Korea for KMEP 17-10 at Sanseo-Ri and Suseong-Ri in the vicinity of Pohang, ROK. Twelfth Marines Headquarters conducted bi-lateral training with the ROKMC 1st Artillery Regiment, while 3/12th Marines conducted bi-lateral training with 2nd Battalion, 1st ROK Artillery Regiment. Battery I/10th Marines partnered with ROKMC 6th Battery for dry fire and live-fire training. During the exchange, Battery Q/11th Marines conducted its first live-fire exercise, firing 24 practice rockets at the Rocket Valley Live Fire Range in the ROK. First and 3rd battalions exchanged batteries, with Battery A/12th Marines returning to Hawaii and Battery B/12th Marines joining the forward deployed force in Okinawa. In Hawaii, Battery C/12th Marines supported the 3rd Marine Infantry Regiment at PTA during Exercise Lava Viper.

July continued the rapid pace of exercises and deployments. Battery B/12th Marines deployed from Camp Hansen, Okinawa, to the Mount Bunday Training Area in Australia for Exercise Talisman Saber 2017. Battery B/12th Marines deployed with a platoon of 120 mm EFSS mortars, conducting live-fire after an air assault in support of 4th Marines. At Camp Hansen, the regimental headquarters conducted a command post exercise for the upcoming regimental exercise. Battery 3/11th Marines also went to CATC Fuji to support 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines for their maneuver training. In Hawaii, 1/12th Marines conducted SF 17.2, a battalion-level exercise across the island of Oahu, simulating an amphibious air and surface assault from MCBH Kaneohe Bay to Marine Corps Training Area Bellows. The battalion subsequently maneuvered to Schofield Barracks to conduct battalion-level live-fire.

In August, the regiment deployed to Hokkaido, Japan, in support of Northern Viper 17.2 with the Japanese Ground Self Defense Force's 11th Field Artillery Unit of the Northern Army. The Regimental Forward and Main COCs deployed from Okinawa to the Yasubetsu Maneuver Area, while 1/12th Marines deployed to YMA from MCBH Kaneohe Bay. Firing units include M777A2 equipped Battery B/12th Marines and Battery K/11th Marines and HIMARS equipped Q/11th Marines, all deploying from Okinawa to YMA. During exercise Northern Viper 17.2, the regiment conducted unilateral and bi-lateral artillery training, firing the first U.S. HIMARS rockets in Japan. NV 17.2 also increased interoperability by estab-



Marines with B Battery, 1st Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, operate an M777A2 light weight towed howitzer during Spartan Fury at the Pohakuloa Training Area, on the big island of Hawaii, March 21. (Cpl. Alex Kouns/U.S. Marine Corps)

lishing the first live-fire bi-lateral fire support coordination center between the USMC and JGSDF. Finally in the month of August, 3/12th Marines returned Battery I/10th Marines to Camp Lejeune, N.C., and received K/10th Marines in Okinawa.

In September and October, 3/12th Marines deployed to CATC Camp Fuji to conduct a battalion-level ARTP firing exercise, ARTP 17-2, deploying from Okinawa with Batteries K/10th Marines and K/11th Marines. This exercise incorporated an amphibious assault scenario, with the battalion simulating phasing its combat power and control ashore from amphibious shipping. In early October, 1/12th Marines deployed to PTA, conducting a Spartan IV exercise where it demonstrated proficiency in a training and readiness evaluation conducted by the regimental headquarters.

In late October, B/12th Marines participated in 4th Marines' Exercise Blue Chromite 18 with a platoon of 120 mm EFSS mortars. During this exercise, the battery conducted a live surface ship-to-shore movement from the USS Green Bay to Okinawa.

November started with Battery E/10th Marines deploying to CATC Camp Fuji to support Second Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment at Fuji Viper 18-1. Battery I/11th Marines deployed to YMA in Hokkaido for ARTP 17-3, conducting a battery live-fire in snow and freezing temperatures. Finally, the UDP HIMARS Battery rotated, with Battery Q/11th Marines returning to Camp Pendleton and Battery T/11th Marines arriving in Okinawa.

In December, Battery T/11th Marines continued the habitual relationship with the 353rd Special Operations Group, rehearsing HIMARS employment aboard MC-130 for raid missions. The regiment closed the year with the Hawaii UDP rotation; Battery B/12th Marines returned to MCBH Kaneohe Bay and Battery C/12th Marines arrived on Okinawa.

As the *Thunder Regiment* looks forward in 2018, opportunities abound for increased capabilities, partnerships and readiness in support of 3rd Marine Division and III MEF.